A Path-Dependent Approach to Communal Transformation: Reconciling Cognitive and Structural Views of Collective Community

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Abstract: Cognitive views claim that ethnic, national, and racial communities are malleable and constantly transforming, while more structural accounts consider these collective communities highly static. This article considers communal transformations at the population level, combines aspects of cognitive and structural perspectives, and uses path dependence to explain why collective communities are transformative in some instances but much more rigid in others. It claims that communal boundaries are usually relatively static because communal structures reinforce them through three main mechanism of reproduction, all of which can reproduce communal frameworks through inclusion and exclusion: cost, power, and socialization. In turn, the article describes how two types of critical juncture create openings for more punctuated and extensive communal transformations. Constructive critical junctures occur prior to the existence of powerful mechanisms of communal reproduction and make possible the construction of new communal frameworks. Alternatively, transformative critical junctures are openings for change that result from the weakening or breakdown of extant mechanisms of reproduction and generally promote transformations in preexisting communal frameworks. To clarify and support the argument, the article provides a variety of examples and an analysis of transformations in the Quebecois collective community.

Key Words: ethnicity; nation; race; transformation; path dependence

Résumé. Les perspectives cognitives affirment que les communautés ethniques, nationales et raciales sont malléables et en constante transformation, tandis que des récits plus structurels considèrent ces communautés collectives comme beaucoup plus statiques. Cet article considère les transformations communautaires au niveau de la population, combine des aspects des perspectives cognitives et structurelles et utilise la dépendance du sentier pour expliquer pourquoi les communautés collectives sont transformatrices dans certains cas mais beaucoup plus rigides dans d'autres. L'article prétend que les frontières communautaires sont relativement statiques parce que les structures communautaires les renforcent

par trois mécanismes de reproduction qui peuvent tous reproduire des cadres communautaires par l'inclusion et l'exclusion: le coût, le pouvoir et la socialisation. À son tour, l'article décrit comment deux types de jonction critique créent des ouvertures pour des transformations communautaires plus ponctuées et étendues. Les jonctions critiques constructives se produisent avant l'existence de mécanismes puissants de reproduction communautaire et rendent possible la construction de nouveaux cadres communautaires. Alternativement, les jonctions critiques transformatrices sont des ouvertures pour le changement qui résultent de l'affaiblissement ou de la rupture des mécanismes de reproduction existants et favorisent généralement les transformations dans les cadres communautaires préexistants. Pour clarifier et étayer l'argumentation, l'article propose une variété d'exemples et une analyse des transformations de la communauté collective québécoise.

Mots Clés: ethnicité; nation; race; transformation; dépendance du sentier

Over the last two decades, cognitive and constructivist perspectives have dominated the study of ethnicity, nation, and race. Contrary to earlier structural conceptualizations, most scholars now emphasize that these types of collective community are, first and foremost, cognitive frameworks shaping how humans perceive themselves and the world around them (Brubaker 2004; Hale 2004; Jenkins 2008; Lamont and Molnár 2002; Loveman 1999). And because communal cognitions are shaped by ever-changing social environments, these works recognize collective community as a construct that is malleable and transformative (Chandra 2012; Fearon and Laitin 2000).

This cognitive turn has been extremely beneficial and corrected imprecise and overly structural views of collective communities in anthropology, political science, and sociology. The newfound dominance of cognitivism and constructivism, however, has pushed many scholars to disregard structural insight and assume that community is also very fluid at the macro-level. Yet abrupt and dramatic transformations in communal categories—while common at the individual-level—are much rarer among populations. Few new collective communities are constructed out of preexisting populations, entire communal categories rarely disappear, and radical shifts in communal boundaries are exceptions rather than the rule. Structural elements of collective community help to explain such stickiness.

In this article, I build on previous works by Barth (1969), Cornell and Hartmann (1998), Jenkins (2008), Ruane and Todd (2004), and Wimmer (2008, 2013) and present a macro-level theory of communal transformation. For this, I integrate cognitive and structural views in a way that rec-

ognizes collective communities as both fluid and fixed. Path dependence is key to bridging cognitive and structural views, with critical junctures and mechanisms of reproduction determining when community is more fluid among populations and when it is relatively fixed. To help clarify these claims and offer initial evidence, the article presents a variety of examples and provides a brief analysis of transformations in Quebecois communal frameworks.

Reconciling Structural and Cognitive Views of Communal Transformation

While recognizing that all three are categorical social constructs, the social scientific literature usually distinguishes between ethnicity, nation, and race. In this article, I consider all three as ideal types of collective community, with ethnicity based on shared culture and history, nation based on membership to a polity, and race based on phenotype and genes. As ideal types, collective communities rarely conform completely to one type and usually mix and match elements of all three. In the pages that follow, I lump ethnicity, nation, and race together and focus on how all collective communities transform. In so doing, I do not deny that the different combinations of the ideal types affect such transformations; they almost certainly do. Believing that a more general theory is needed before more particular theories, however, I focus on collective communal transformations more broadly instead of considering ethnicity, nation, and race separately.

Prior to the 1990s, most social scientific work on collective communities took a structural perspective. These works focus on entire populations and analyze factors that make communities concrete entities. A structure is an enduring pattern of social relations, and communal structures are social relations that are patterned by community and take a distinct, recognizable, and recurring form. Structuralists focus on these patterns. Communally segregated neighborhoods and high incarceration rates among certain communities are two particular examples of communal structures, but collective community patterns social relations in many more ways, including organizational membership, occupation, discriminatory behavior, political support, the distribution of power, public rituals, and access to public goods. These structures frequently shape the livelihoods of individuals and are therefore incredibly meaningful, making a structural view indispensable for scholars of community.

Over the past few decades, a major critique of the structuralist position has emerged. The main element of this critique is that structural

views are groupist: They perceive ethnic, national, and racial communities as concrete entities and claim that such groupism is oversimplified and inaccurate. A related critique concerns the tendency of structuralists to disregard communal transformations and to focus on communities as fixed entities. Both critiques are important, and cognitive views of community help to address them.

Cognitive views of community are not new. Over a hundred years ago, Durkheim famously argued that the human brain has two levels of consciousness—the individual and the collective—and saw communities as based on our collective consciousness (Durkheim 1893/1984; Haidt 2012). Yet Durkheim combined cognition with structuralism, and he ultimately placed greatest emphasis on the latter. Subsequent work by Barth and Tajfel focus much more clearly on and privilege cognitive elements of community. Barth (1969) critiques structural views of ethnicity as based on cultural differences and concludes that ethnicity is fundamentally categorical, with people perceiving communal categories and acting in ways that make ethnicities real and meaningful. Tajfel's (1970, 1974, 1978) psychological experiments consider the mechanisms that promote categorical social divisions. He offers evidence that the human brain is prewired to perceive ingroup and outgroup categories and needs only meaningless prompts to begin processes of differentiation, segregation, and discrimination. Following the lead of Barth and Tajfel, social scientists from a variety of fields increasingly conceptualize collective communities as cognitive in character: They are categorical cognitive frameworks shaping how people perceive themselves and the social world around them (Brubaker 2004; Hale 2004; Jenkins 2008; Loveman 1999). In this way, community is a matter of perception, with people seeing the world through communal lenses.

Contemporary analyses of communal transformation generally take a particular cognitive view referred to as constructivism. This perspective focuses on individual mental states, conceptualizes community as a mental category, and is based on the premise that communal categories are social constructs (Brubaker 2004; Chandra 2012; Fearon and Laitin 2000; Gilley 2004). And as a social construct, constructivists recognize that community is not fixed but transformative, as the communal categories people perceive are influenced by social relations. At an extreme, some suggest communal categories are so varied and transformative that it can be difficult to accurately categorize social phenomena as communal in character.

Constructivism generally focuses on two determinants of communal transformation—instrumentalism and situationalism. Instrumentalism considers how people purposefully transform communal categories

when it is in their interest to do so, and one common example involves political elites manipulating communal categories in ways that maximize mobilization and electoral support (Brass 1997; Fearon and Laitin 2000; Gagnon 2004; Woodward 1995). Situationalism emerged in both psychology and anthropology and is commonly referred to as either self-categorization theory or the situational school of anthropology (Galaty 1982; Moerman 1965; Turner et al. 1994; Waters 1990). These theories emphasize how the social context shapes communal identification. From this view, people identify with multiple communities, and the social context determines which communal hat is worn at any one time. Notably, instrumentalism and situationalism need not be separate, as Posner (2005) shows how both can interact to affect the salience of communal categories.

Structural accounts of communal transformation are relatively rare, but those that exist generally support constructivist accounts by describing community as a transformative social construct shaped by social relations. At the same time, structuralists focus on communal structures—not cognition—and offer evidence that collective community is usually rigid among populations. In this way, structuralists suggest that community is malleable but sticky. Structural accounts of communal transformation, in turn, have two common focuses, both of which highlight these seemingly contradictory traits.

First, some consider how shared communal categories spread throughout large segments of the population. For this, scholars analyze how mobilizational, communication, symbolic, and cultural resources—all linked to social structures—facilitate the spread and acceptance of communal categories. Anderson (1983) and Weber (1976) provide classic examples. They consider nations from a cognitive perspective and recognize the roles that print capitalism and states play in manipulating and popularizing national categories among large populations. Once these categories are created and become structured in a variety of social relations, however, both Anderson and Weber disregard communal transformations and depict nations as unchanging.

A second group of scholars suggests that communal transformations are hardly as common as more micro-oriented cognitivists claim. Although quite fluid at the micro-level, collective communities are more rigid at the population level because social structures commonly persist for long periods and reinforce preexisting frameworks. Barth (1969) offers an early and influential example of this view. Contrary to the more malleable view that he helped to inspire, Barth looks at communities from a meso-level and suggests that communal structures pattern social relations in ways that enforce—and thereby reproduce—communal

cognitive categories among populations. He pays particular attention to mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion that enforce communal boundaries and thereby perpetuate particular communal categories over long periods. Cornell and Hartmann (1998), Verdery (1994), and Wimmer (2008, 2013) complement Barth by highlighting a variety of social structures that limit communal transformations among populations via inclusion and exclusion, with states playing particularly influential roles.

When taking a macro perspective, it is difficult to disagree with structural depictions of collective community as sometimes transformative but usually rigid, as there are clear examples of population-level communal transformation, but such cases are rare. Yet most structural accounts of communal transformation are underdeveloped in one very important way: They pay little attention to when collective community is malleable and when it is fixed. While many factors undoubtedly affect communal transformations at the macro-level, path dependence offers important insight into such variation and helps to link the micro and the macro.

Path Dependence and Collective Community

Over the past two decades, scholars have employed path dependence to explain various aspects of social relations but have only rarely applied it to communal transformation. Path dependence is a temporal concept suggesting that there are crucial periods when major transformations are possible but other periods when such changes are much more difficult (Mahoney 2000; Pierson 2000). These crucial periods of change—commonly referred to as critical junctures—are made possible by structural openings. Once change occurs during the critical juncture, however, the transformation becomes locked in, making subsequent changes much more difficult (although not impossible). Timing is therefore vitally important for path-dependent processes, as radical change is easy at certain times but not others.

Path dependence helps to link micro- and macro-level processes while recognizing the importance of both structure and agency. During critical junctures, structural openings allow actors to have important effects, and decisions and actions taken at this time can have large and enduring consequences. Yet through mechanisms of reproduction, these effects become structured and pattern social relations in long-lasting ways, thereby shaping how many people act and limiting their agency.

A popular example of path dependence is the QWERTY keyboard, that is, the standard American keyboard on which the first six letters of

the upper row are QWERTY (David 1985). The QWERTY layout became popular after the introduction of the Remington No. 2 typewriter in 1878, which was the first typewriter to include both upper and lower case letters. At that time, typewriters were a relatively new invention, and all typewriter manufacturers used their own keyboards. Due to the success of the Remington No. 2, however, QWERTY became the standard format, and other keyboards quickly disappeared because typists who had mastered the QWERTY keyboard did not want to lose time and energy learning a new keyboard. The previous facility of changing the keyboard therefore ended, and the QWERTY keyboard became nearly unchangeable.

When applied to collective community, path dependence helps to combine cognitive and structural views of communal transformation by recognizing that population-level transformations in communal categories are possible at certain times whereas they are more fixed at other times. Prior to the structuring of community in social relations, radical transformations are possible, as constructivism suggests, and actors are able to shape collective communities. Thereafter, however, communal structures emerge and reinforce communal categories in ways that limit transformations at the population level, as structuralists commonly describe. Path dependence suggests that this stickiness results from communal structures that reinforce communal frameworks among populations through mechanisms of reproduction. While these mechanisms do not prevent individuals from changing their communal frameworks, they restrain large-scale transformations among populations.

Although not employing the term "path dependence," Barth (1969) recognizes that inclusion and exclusion are two common and interrelated mechanisms that reinforce communal boundaries. More recently, Ruane and Todd (2004) and Wimmer (2008) explicitly note the path-dependent character of communal transformations and focus on how power structures and "thick" identities reinforce communal boundaries through both exclusion and inclusion. While not considering communal transformations, Mahoney (2000) proposes multiple mechanisms that reproduce path-dependent processes. Three of these—cost, power, and socialization—commonly reinforce communal frameworks through both inclusion and exclusion and play particularly important roles in restricting communal transformations.

Cost promotes path dependence by making change relatively expensive. For example, institutional stasis can result when the maintenance of preexisting institutions is cheaper than planning and implementing major reforms. In this same way, major changes in communal frameworks are commonly very costly, as individuals invest in their communities and

receive returns on these investments. If individuals act in ways that break norms meant to protect their community, they might be alienated from their network of social support, which generally comes with enormous costs. Language, which is a common basis of communal difference, offers another example but is different because costs need not be the result of sanctions. Instead, people invest in languages and incur great costs when forced to learn and use another, creating a cost-based incentive to maintain language-based communities.

In addition to cost, power can also promote sticky communal frameworks. Powerful actors frequently have a stake in the status quo and exercise their power to prevent change. Once a communal category is popularized and social relations are patterned by community, elites receive considerable status, power, and resources due to their position as communal leaders. These actors therefore use their influence and resources to obstruct major changes in communal frameworks that might threaten their positions.

Socialization is the third mechanism of reproduction deterring communal transformation. It actively shapes cognitive frameworks, norms, understandings, and values that are internalized by actors and direct them to act in ways that perpetuate the status quo. Thus, communal frameworks are perpetuated when socializing agents teach people who they are, what community they belong to, the importance of being a member of this community, and the symbols and myths that represent community. There are numerous socializing agents involved in this process, especially the family, education, the state, and religion. While initial communal socialization is explicit, more banal secondary socialization is much more hidden and maintains communal frameworks through everyday activities and relations (Billig 1995). Most importantly, initial socialization teaches myths and symbols that represent community, and the omnipresence of these myths and symbols helps to reproduce communal frameworks on a daily basis.

Importantly, cost, power, and socialization mechanisms are commonly inter-related and complement one another. For example, socialization promotes shared norms that cause people to police their own actions out of a sense of propriety, but sanctions for breaking norms impose costs and can also restrain deviant behaviour that endangers communities. Similarly, the power mechanism commonly limits change by giving teeth to sanctions, thereby providing people with very strong incentives not to break norms. All three mechanisms are also similar in that they maintain communal frameworks either by excluding "others" or unifying the ingroup.

Costs, power, and socialization often promote rigid communal boundaries when members of one community actively exclude others. Powerful actors exert their influence to maintain boundaries and thereby keep "others" out, people sanction outgroup members for trying to interact with their ingroup in inappropriate ways, and individuals are socialized to hold prejudicial views against outgroup members and to exclude them from their social relations. The exclusion of African Americans by White Americans offers one example of a dominant community excluding a minority in ways that promote rigid communal boundaries, something Frederick Douglass (1881) famously referred to as the "color line." Although ongoing, this communal exclusion was especially evident during the Jim Crow era, when several state governments outlawed intimate inter-racial relationships and actively enforced racial segregation. Many white families and other institutions, in turn, socialized people to hold prejudicial views against African Americans and to avoid social contact with them. Finally, African Americans faced a variety of sanctions for disregarding the color line, ranging from aggressive looks to lynchings. As this example shows, the presence of a racist ideology promoted powerful communal boundaries, suggesting that exclusion is a particularly powerful means of differentiation when communities are racialized and ranked.

Mechanisms that promote collective communities through inclusion are very different from mechanisms of exclusion and are most common and powerful when actors are concerned that assimilation into an outgroup threatens the survival of the community. As such, this general mechanism is especially influential when communities are neither racialized nor highly stratified. That being said, Black pride movements show how exclusion can push communities to employ inclusive mechanisms to make sense of and deal with the psychological hardships, social inequalities, and segregated relations caused by powerful mechanisms of exclusion.

While exclusionary mechanisms targeting Jewish minorities reinforced communal frameworks and boundaries in Europe and North America, there is a large literature describing how Jewish actors also enforce communal boundaries to maintain group identification and thereby prevent assimilation into majority communities (Cohen and Eisen 2000; Goldsheider 1986; Himmelfarb 1980; Kalmijn et al. 2006; Sklare and Greenblum 1967; Weinfeld 2001). Rabbis and other community leaders can use their power to enforce boundaries, and the socializing influence of the family and peers and the costly sanctions that they impose for integrating into non-Jewish communities provide impediments to assimilation. Notably, Jewish intermarriage and assimilation have increased con-

siderably in the United States and elsewhere over the past half-century, and the weakening of the mechanisms of inclusion help to explain this transformation. The main exception is ultra-Orthodox Jewish communities, who continue to live in social environments that maintain rigid communal boundaries. Rabbis remain powerful and enforce closed communities, social relations are isolated from dominant cultures and socialize members to maintain communal boundaries and strong identification, and families and community members are still able to use sanctions to limit contact with other communities (Himmelfarb 1980; Waite and Friedman 1997).

CRITICAL JUNCTURES AND COMMUNAL TRANSFORMATION

A common critique of path dependence is that "critical juncture" is a tautological concept: A juncture is critical if change occurs during it, so the concept is explained by the outcome that it is supposed to explain. To avoid this problem, analyses must clarify what makes a critical juncture transformative, thereby separating a critical juncture from change and establishing the critical juncture as prior to change. A look at communal transformations suggests that there are two conceptually distinct types of critical juncture that create openings for population-level changes.

First, and most clearly, a critical juncture is present when population-level communal frameworks are either absent or weak and undeveloped, thereby creating a situation in which no communal alternative severely restrains the creation and proliferation of new communal frameworks. I refer to this as a "constructive" critical juncture in recognition that new communal frameworks can be created at this time without necessarily replacing or reformulating older ones. The second type of critical juncture occurs when broad collective communal frameworks are present and supported by major social institutions. In this situation, path-dependent transformation is possible when preexisting mechanisms of communal reproduction weaken or break down. I refer to this type as a "transformative" critical juncture, as communal frameworks are present but reformulated at this time. Importantly, constructive and transformative critical junctures are best conceptualized not as rigid categories but as opposite ends of a continuum, with cases positioned anywhere in between the extremes. While the distinction between constructive and transformative critical junctures is theoretically relevant, it is also important for analytic purposes, as each type orients the researcher to focus on different things: Constructive critical junctures direct primary attention to the social carri-

ers of community, whereas the transformative type focuses greater attention on mechanisms of reproduction.

Constructive Critical Junctures and Communal Transformation

A collective community is a type of ingroup, and social scientists from diverse disciplines offer evidence that humans are predisposed to recognize ingroups and outgroups (Brewer 1999; Brown 1991; Greene 2013; Maryanski and Turner 1992; Turner 2000). As such, there was never a place or time in which humans were complete blank slates free to be communalized by social carriers. Throughout most of human history, however, human ingroups were communities of acquaintance, as people knew—or knew of—all members of the ingroup. It was only with the rise of settled agriculture some 10,000 years ago that urbanization, advances in communication technologies, and the development of powerful organizations began to make possible the rise of large ingroups of strangers, which Anderson (1983) famously refers to as "imagined communities." Although present earlier in some places, shared collective communal frameworks among many unknown members rarely became powerful and elaborate schema until the 18th and 19th centuries, at which time a variety of powerful institutions actively enforced them (Anderson 1983; Banton 1997; Gellner 1983; Greenfeld 1992; Malešević 2013). Given the absence or weakness of imagined communal frameworks before this time, new communal frameworks faced little opposition from old ones, making this period a constructive critical juncture.

Most scholars who analyze the rise and spread of collective communities focus on the period of "modern" social transformations linked to a growing division of labour, capitalist development, mass education, and state-building as a constructive critical junctures (Anderson 1983; Darden forthcoming; Gellner 1983; Lange 2017; Weber 1976; Wimmer 2002). They suggest that modern social processes promote the rise of broad communal frameworks and that collective communities subsequently persist without major transformations. According to this literature, the most influential social carriers of these large-scale collective communities are state elites and administrators, who seek to promote national communities in an attempt to build a nation-state. Other influential actors include religious authorities and intelligentsia, some of whom help state-led nation-building efforts and others of whom obstruct them by popularizing rival communal frameworks. Importantly, these three social carriers are influential because they control organizations—states, religious institutions, and schools—that allow them to proliferate ideas

of collective community among dispersed and large populations who previously lacked large-scale communal frameworks.

Lange (2017) and Darden (forthcoming) provide two recent works that combine path dependence with modernist views to analyze constructive critical junctures. In *Killing Others*, Lange analyzes the causes of ethnic violence and considers why it occurs in some places but not others. Through an analysis of several cases in different regions of the world, he concludes that social carriers contributed to multiple and competing communal frameworks in some places but not others and that this difference depended on the social carriers that were present during constructive critical junctures. One of Lange's cases is the Karens, a community that lives on both sides of the border between Myanmar and Thailand. He notes that Karen communal frameworks and boundaries are much stronger, more rigid, and more exclusive among Myanmar Karens than Thai Karens and explores why this is the case.

Prior to the mid-19th century, Lange argues that Karen communities in Myanmar were very localized and that very few Karens viewed themselves as members of a large imagined community that extended beyond clan, village, or collection of villages. At this time, it was hardly certain that a pan-Karen communal framework would emerge and strengthen, as Karens spoke multiple languages, practiced different religions, had different cultural practices, and were assimilating into the dominant cultures that surrounded them. This began to change due to the influence of both missionaries and colonialism, and a new pan-Karen communal category that combined elements of ethnicity, nation, and race soon emerged and gained influence. Christian missionaries from Europe—and especially—the United States contributed to this new communal framework both because of a tendency to recognize communal diversity and because differentiating Karens from Buddhist Bamars facilitated conversion. As one missionary declared, "From a loose aggregation of clans we shall weld them into a nation yet" (Lange 2017: 117). Lange finds that they successfully pursued this goal in a number of ways: by making Karen languages written languages, providing Karens education in their languages, creating flags and other symbols representing the Karen community, teaching Karen myths about their common origins and history in their schools, running printing presses that produced literature describing Karens as a nation, converting many Karens, and creating associations that allowed Karens from all regions of the colony to meet and discuss Karen interests. British colonialism was a second influential social carrier at this time, and British officials employed a variety of policies that complemented missionary efforts to construct and strengthen Karen imagined communities. For example, the British recognized Karens as a

distinct community by gathering information on them in censuses, provided Karens with special representation in the colonial legislative council, and stacked the military with Karens.

Things were very different on the Thai side of the border. Thailand avoided European colonialism, which prevented the implementation of divide-and-rule style policies. Instead, the Thai government initiated a variety of nation-building policies in the 1870s in an effort to prevent colonial conquest and thereby made an early and concerted effort to incorporate Karens into the Thai nation. As a result, the first and most powerful social carrier during the constructive critical juncture formally declared Karens part of a larger Thai national community. Moreover, the Thai government constrained Christian missionary influence (whether Europeans or Myanmar Karens) and forced missionaries to teach in Thai and incorporate Thai nationalism into their curricula. Notably, trans-border relations and population movements from Myanmar helped to spread Karen communal frameworks to Thailand, and discriminatory policies implemented by the Thai state gave meaning to these frameworks. Yet due to the early influence of Thai nationalization efforts and the limited influence of other social carriers, Lange argues that the Karen framework never became as powerful and rigid as in Myanmar, and most Thai Karens developed hybrid communal frameworks causing them to self-identify as Thais who are also Karens.

In *Resisting Occupation in Eurasia*, Darden (forthcoming) tries to explain why some regions of Eastern Europe fought foreign occupation in the 20th century while others did not, and his explanation focuses on how nationalist frameworks were created during a constructive critical juncture, persisted over long periods, and determined reactions to foreign occupation. He notes that education played a vital role creating and popularizing nationalist frameworks during the constructive critical junctures. Prior to mass education, communal frameworks were localized, and people did not view themselves as part of imagined national communities. In this situation, educators who were free to mold new national identities, and these communal frameworks proved very enduring. Darden's analysis focuses on socialization as the main mechanism of reproduction and provides evidence that parents and community members reinforced national categories via the socialization of subsequent generations even after the nationalist content of schools changed.

A major part of Darden's analysis focuses on national variation within Ukraine. He argues that nearly all people living in what is presently Ukraine lacked nationalist communal frameworks prior to the initiation of mass education in the 19th century and that the nationalist content of mass education varied greatly throughout the territory. In the Stan-

islaviv region, for example, initial mass education supported Ukrainian nationalism. This communal framework became very powerful, and the region subsequently opposed Soviet occupation and Russian nationalism. Alternatively, Transcarpathia, which borders Stanislaviv, had an educational system that taught students that they were Russian peoples, and the inhabitants of this region did not oppose Soviet occupation and have been much more favorable to Russian nationalism. Darden argues, in turn, that these conflicting nationalist views have persisted through socialization and help to explain the present nationalist conflict in Ukraine.

Adjusting Pathways: Transformative Critical Junctures

As examples from Burma, Thailand, and Ukraine highlight, communal categories at the population level are malleable before communal frameworks are widely held, but the contours of communal frameworks become more rigid once such frameworks are popularized. Yet even after constructive critical junctures, the transformation of communal frameworks among populations—while difficult—remains possible. Transformative critical junctures offer insight into social change that radically readjusts preexisting communal pathways.

Transformative critical junctures occur when preexisting mechanisms of reproduction weaken or breakdown. For major communal reformulations to occur during transformative critical junctures, however, influential social carriers that popularize new ideas of community must also be present and active. Because imagined communal frameworks and structures already exist, these social carriers have less room to manoeuver than the communal social carriers during constructive critical junctures. Transformative critical junctures are therefore more constrained by what Slater and Simmons (2010) refer to as "critical antecedents," with preexisting communal frameworks and the structures that enforce them restraining the extent of transformation.

Twentieth-century Quebec provides an example of extensive transformations in communal frameworks during a transformative critical juncture that occurred. Specifically, a powerful French Canadian communal category existed at this time, but a new Quebecois communal category emerged and differentiated the Quebecois from francophones in other provinces. The rise of the new Quebecois communal framework required both the weakening of mechanisms that enforced the French Canadian communal framework and the presence of effective social carriers of the new Quebecois communal framework.

Although provincial boundaries have always been a basis of identification, there was little recognition of a Quebecois community until the

1960s. Instead, a broader communal category—French Canadian—included all francophone Canadians, was popularly accepted, and easily trumped provincial communal frameworks. The French Canadian framework was based on Catholic faith, French settler origins, and language. The first pillar was extremely important, as the Catholic Church was the most influential institution in francophone communities and supported an overarching French Canadian communal framework to help maintain the French Catholic flock (Zubrzycki 2016).

The Quiet Revolution is commonly recognized as having begun the process of replacing the French Canadian communal framework in Quebec with a Quebecois communal framework. This period of rapid social change gained force after the election of Jean Lesage's Liberal government in 1960, which broke the back of the conservative regime and removed the Catholic Church from Quebec politics. In reality, the revolution had important antecedents—such as industrialization, urbanization, and the education—that expanded during the first half of the 20th century and accelerated rapidly following the Second World War (Behiels 1985). These forces weakened religious conservatives and contributed to a social movement that empowered a new government focused on modernizing Quebec and improving the position of francophones vis-à-vis an advantaged anglophone minority.

Prior to the Quiet Revolution, processes were at work that began to weaken mechanisms that reproduced the French Canadian communal framework and thereby created an opening for the rise of a Quebecois communal framework. Historically, francophone Canadians lived in all provinces, but their percentages outside of Quebec decreased throughout the 20th century because of full or partial assimilation into anglophone communities. By 1960, approximately three-quarters of all francophone Canadians lived in Quebec. In this way, the difference between French Canadian and Quebecois diminished. The Quiet Revolution and its antecedent causes, in turn, severely weakened the power of the Catholic Church in Quebec, thereby impeding its ability to reinforce a more religious-based French Canadian communal framework. Most notably, francophones living in Quebec became increasingly secular and commonly resented the Church for the great power that it exerted in both private and public spheres. In the place of the Catholic Church, the Quebec provincial government and public intellectuals became increasingly influential. The provincial government, however, had no authority over francophones living in other provinces. Moreover, an increasing number of intellectuals and politicians concluded that the only viable option for protecting the French language and culture was the secession of Quebec from Canada. Elites therefore faced constraints and had interests that

pushed them to both differentiate between French Canadians in Quebec and other French Canadians and declare the presence of a Quebecois nation.

The provincial government shaped popular incentives for a Quebecois communal framework in influential ways. Prior to the Quiet Revolution, the Quebec provincial state offered few public services; indeed, the Catholic Church provided most of them. After the Quiet Revolution, however, the Quebec provincial government quickly became the largest welfare state in North America. A provincial pension system was created, education expanded massively at all levels, and a system of public healthcare was constructed. These services were only offered to residents of Quebec, making provincial residence an influential factor shaping access to resources.

The massive educational system, in turn, became an extremely influential source of socialization, shifted attention away from the factors that bound French Canadians, and emphasized the unique characteristics of Quebecois. Most notably, schools now taught curricula that focused on Quebec history, the struggles and hardship suffered by Quebecois at the hands of the British conquerors, and secularism (Coleman 1984; Cook 1967; Hodgetts 1968; Lebrun et al. 2002; Trudel and Jain 1970). Intellectuals and the media were also influential socializers of a Quebecois communal framework. Public intellectuals helped to found the nationalist movement and focused attention on the Quebecois nation. As protectors of the French language, they also emphasized the importance of language and commonly claimed that the only way to prevent French from declining like in the other provinces was greater political autonomy. And because intellectuals constructed the new Quebec-focused educational curricula, they had the means to clearly articulate and spread a Quebecois consciousness.

Thus, the disempowering of the Catholic Church and its political allies weakened mechanisms of reproduction, and the increasing power of the provincial government and secular intellectuals—the main social carriers of a Quebecois communal framework—purposefully proliferated a new communal category. Growing secularism weakened the costs of opposing the Catholic Church's preferred French Canadian communal framework, and the provincial government dispersed public goods in ways that made being Quebecois very valuable. The decreasing power of the Catholic Church, in turn, prevented it from effectively opposing communal transformations, whereas the growing power of the provincial government allowed it to proliferate and strengthen the Quebecois communal framework. Finally, the socializing power of the church de-

creased, and schools, the media, and the provincial government began socializing people to identify with and value the Quebecois nation.

While showing the strengthening and proliferation of a new communal framework during a transformative critical juncture, one must recognize that the rise of a Quebecois communal framework was not that radical of a change. The Quebecois category simply created a subcategory of French Canadian and maintained the francophone-anglophone division. Clear inequalities and religious and linguistic differences between anglophones and francophones were important critical antecedents that prevented the social carriers of the Quebecois communal framework from trying to simply disregard or break down boundaries between anglophones and francophones. Thus, the Quebecois example shows how radically reformed categories are created during new critical junctures, but it also offers evidence that critical antecedents severely limit the scope of communal transformation during secondary critical junctures.

CONCLUSION

This article uses path dependence to bridge the gap between cognitivist and structuralist views of communal transformation and builds a theory explaining variation in communal transformation at the population level. It suggests that collective communities have both cognitive and structural sides and that each offers important insight into social processes. Because of this dual character, collective communities can be as fluid as cognitivists claim, but structuralists rightly note that community can also be quite fixed at the population level because structures pattern social relations in ways that shape cognitions among large numbers of people. And a path-dependent view of communal transformation helps to explain when communal frameworks can rapidly transform among populations and when they are more rigid. Cost, power, and socialization mechanisms commonly enforce and reproduce communal boundaries through both exclusion and inclusion, thereby making large-scale changes in community rare. Yet major macro-level changes in communal frameworks are possible prior to the emergence of powerful mechanisms of reproduction and when extant mechanisms of reproduction weaken or breakdown. Importantly, the scale of change depends on the type of critical juncture, as critical antecedents are much more constraining during transformative critical junctures.

To date, path-dependent explanations focus overwhelmingly on institutional persistence, especially economic and political institutions

(Acemoglu and Robinson 2012; Collier and Collier 1991; Mahoney 2001). This literature considers how path dependence reconciles agentic and structural approaches by highlighting critical periods when agency is possible and other periods when structures constrain agency. I build on past works to apply path dependence to communal transformation and focus on the cognitive-structural divide that is present among analyses of collective community. Cognitive approaches to community have affinities with the agency position, as they consider the role of human agency in communal transformations, and a path-dependent view of communal transformation offers insight into social environments that either free or constrain the cognitive capacities of large numbers of people to form or transform communal categories. In so doing, path dependence helps to highlight when social carriers are more likely to successfully popularize their favored communal frameworks.

In applying path dependence to ethnicity, nation, and race, the article also makes contributions to the literature on path dependence. Few scholars consider different types of critical junctures, but this article conceptualizes two types—constructive and transformative—and describes how they shape the scope and scale of change. It also describes how transformative critical junctures are more constrained by preexisting frameworks and structures, thereby helping to reconcile differences between past works focusing on either contingency or critical antecedents by showing how both can be important.

While highlighting how communal transformations commonly occur in a path-dependent fashion, I conclude by noting that path dependence is not the only way in which communal frameworks change at the population level. Collective communities depend on shared communal frameworks among large numbers of people, and there is always disagreement over the boundaries and character of communal categories. As a result, communal frameworks are constantly moving among populations, and incremental change is common. That being said, a path-dependent approach to communal transformation is vital to understand why and when large and rapid transformations occur. Even more, it can improve the study of more gradual change by directing attention to key factors affecting the possibility and extent of incremental change—the social carriers pursuing change and the mechanisms of reproduction that limit transformations. Indeed, incremental changes in communal frameworks are similar to change during a transformative critical juncture, with the main difference being either that the social carriers are weaker, that the mechanisms of communal reproduction are stronger, or both.

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